

Busting the Tick Myths

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THE MYTH	THE TRUTH
Ticks die off during winter.	Ticks do not die just because it is winter. They do become less active during cold months but can still attach to your pet—and transmit potentially deadly diseases.
I never see ticks on my pet, so we do not have ticks in our area.	Ticks are present throughout the U.S. The 3 life stages capable of attaching to pets (nymph, larva, and adult) are very small. Unless there are dozens of ticks present, or the ticks have fed long enough to become engorged (about 7 days), most infestations go unnoticed.
Ticks should be removed with alcohol, a lit match, nail polish, petroleum jelly, etc.	The best removal method is grabbing a tick with tweezers as close to the skin as possible and using gentle, steady traction to lift it. Other methods may facilitate the transmission of infectious agents.
Ticks fall from trees.	Ticks live on and just above the ground. When the host approaches, they release from low vegetation and attach to the animal.
Those medications do not work—I still see ticks.	No product is 100% effective. Consider this: If a pet encounters 1,000 ticks, a product with 99% efficacy (considered excellent by medical standards) may still leave 10 ticks. With very high exposure, additional measures may be necessary to protect your pet.
My dog does not go outside, so I don't need to worry about ticks.	Does your dog go outside to relieve him- or herself? Even a short excursion increases the risk for ticks.
I'll start using medication if I see ticks.	Prevention is better for your pet and more cost-effective for you. By the time ticks are detected, disease transmission may have already occurred.
I treat my yard, so my pet does not need medications.	Environmental control is <i>great</i> , but it is one of many components of effective tick control and alone is not enough. Combining yard treatment, minor landscaping changes, and—most importantly—year-round preventives for your pet will keep him or her safer.